

ARABIA TO HAVE MANY RAILROADS

John Bull Is Gobbling the Peninsula and Planning Large Immediate Development.



A GROUP AT ADEN

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

HAVE you ever heard what some one said to the Englishman who boasted that the sun never set on John Bull's possessions. It was "that the sun did not dare to set for fear the old pirate might steal something more."

As it is now the English own countries in nearly every part of the globe. They have more land in North America than we have. They have recently added to their African colonies, so that they now own more than one-third of that continent, and they are slowly and surely gathering in everything else that lies loose. One of the latest acquisitions is Arabia. They now practically control the whole of it. They have the Sinai peninsula, through their possession of Egypt, and they can control that part of Arabia along the Red Sea through the ports which they are building on the opposite coast. They have entered into the closest of relations with the sultan of Oman, and they have two unswerving kings in the persons of certain of their political residents and consuls-general, who control the whole of Eastern and Southern Arabia. The first of these is stationed at Bushire, in Persia, but he has made treaties with the various tribes along the Arabian side of the Persian Gulf, which give the English the trade of that region; and the same trade as to the tribes of Southern Arabia, who are controlled by the British resident here at Aden. These two consuls-general have established postoffices and postal routes through their respective spheres of influence, and they control not only the mails, but money matters as well. They are working in connection with India, and the moneys used are rupees and annas. If difficulties arise between the Arabs and Persians they are brought to the English resident at Bushire, and between the tribes of Southern Arabia, they are brought to Aden for adjustment.

Arabia to Have Railroads.

At the same time, the English are considering the development of the peninsula. They have proposed to build a pilgrimage railway from Jeddah, on the Red Sea, opposite Port Sudan, to Mecca, the great Arab of Mohammedan worship inland to Mecca. This would connect with their new railroad which now crosses the Arabian desert from Suez to the Cape to Cairo route, and would open up an immense passenger traffic from Central Africa and upper Egypt during the pilgrim season. If the English are not granted the concession, the other entrance is more than three miles wide. The inner waters have been so dredged that steamers of 25 feet can go everywhere, and there is room enough for all the vessels that pass through the canal to anchor here at one time.

A Desert City.

I wish I could show you the town as it lies before me. It is the sorriest city I have ever seen. There is nothing to compare with it except Iquiqui, on the nitrate coast of South America, and Iquiqui is a paradise to it. Imagine a great harbor of sea-green water, the shores of which rise almost abruptly into rugged mountains of brown rock and white sand. There is not a blade of grass to be seen, there are no trees, and even the cactus and sagebrush of our American deserts are absent. The town is situated on the edge of the desert behind it, and its tropical sun beats down out of a cloudless African sky. Everything is gray and dazzling white. The houses on the sides of the hills are white, the rocks throw back the rays of the sun, and the hue upon their sides are of the same gray color as themselves.

The Arabian Peninsula.

As to Arabia itself, I doubt whether it will ever furnish a large traffic for railroads. There are certain provinces, such as Yemen, Oman and the Valley of Mesopotamia, which are fairly well populated; but the whole peninsula has altogether not more than 8,000,000, and these are scattered over a territory one-third as large as the whole United States. There are not a score of towns of any size in all Arabia, and you can count the cities on your fingers. The most of the country is like that about Aden, consisting of bleak, bare and rocky desert, with only a collection of black tents or thatched huts to break the monotony, and with trackless sands reaching off into the distance. And still Arabia has a coastline 10,000 miles longer than the distance

between New York and San Francisco. It measures about 1500 miles from north to south and 1500 miles from east to west. Almost the whole of the United States east of the Mississippi could be crowded into its borders, and a considerable part of it is still unexplored by white men. It is a mountainous country. It has peaks twice as high as Mount Washington, and the tableland of Nijl is on the average more than a half-mile above the sea. South of Mecca there are mountains over 8000 feet high, and the hills here at Aden are about as high as the average elevation of the Blue Ridge in Virginia. Yemen, northeast of Aden, running along the Red Sea, has a fairly good rainfall and climate. The same is true of Oman and Muscat. The Valley of Mesopotamia is watered by the Euphrates, and is as fertile as Egypt, but the greater part of the peninsula is as barren as the Sahara.

The Land of Mocha Coffee.

The very best of our Mocha coffee is shipped from Aden to the United States. It comes here on camels from the Province of Yemen. It is raised there by the natives, officials and soldiers. The bushes about its house, and producing only enough for home use and a little for trading. There are no big plantations and no coffee factories. The berries are gathered when ripe and dried in the sun. After this they are put up in bales, and carried on camelback over the hills to this place. They are filled between millstones turned by hand, and are then winnowed and sorted for shipment. The latter work is done by the women, who look over each grain carefully and take out the bad ones. Labor is cheap, but the coffee has to go through many hands. It pays toll to the chiefs of the tribes who own the country through which it is carried, and as a result it must be sold at high prices. For this reason we have imitations of Mocha coffee from all parts of the world. During my stay on the plantations of Brazil I have seen them laboring with Mocha; and Guatemala and other coffees are sold under the same name. Just now they are bringing coffee from Ceylon and Java to Aden, and transshipping them here. They lie in the warehouses for a few weeks, and then go forth re-marked, and perhaps re-garbed, as Arabian Mocha.

The English at Aden.

This port of Aden has belonged to John Bull for something like 68 years. He took possession of it in 1839, and later on gobbled up the Island of Perim in the Strait of Bab-el-Mandeb. That island is about a hundred miles from here, and the two places practically control the entrance to the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. As for Aden, it is the Gibraltar of this part of the world as well as one of the greatest of the British coaling stations. Something like 3000 steamers and native craft call at it every year. The harbor is excellent, and the outer entrance is more than three miles wide. The inner waters have been so dredged that steamers of 25 feet can go everywhere, and there is room enough for all the vessels that pass through the canal to anchor here at one time.

Camels and Caravans.

This is the land of the camel. Caravans are coming in and going out of the city every day. They bring bags of Mocha coffee and gums and take out European goods and other supplies to the various oases. There is a considerable trade with Yemen and also with the tribes of Southern Arabia. There are always camels lying in the market place, and one sees them bubbling and crying as they are loaded and unloaded. They are the most disconcerted beasts upon earth, and are as mean as they look. One bit at me this afternoon as I passed it, and I am told that they never become reconciled to their masters. Nevertheless, they are the freight animals of this part of the world, and the desert could not get along without them. They furnish the greater part of the milk for the various Arab settlements, the people make their tents of camel's hair, and they are, in fact, the cows of the desert, and they are of many different breeds, and they vary as much in character as horses. There are some breeds that correspond to the percheron, and the best among them can carry half a ton at a load. There are others fitted only for riding and passenger travel. The ordinary freight camel makes only about three miles an hour, and is miles in a good day's work. The best racing camels will travel 20 hours at a stretch, and will cover 100 miles in a day. Seventy-five miles in ten hours is not an uncommon journey for an Arabian racer, and much better speed has been made. As to prices, an ordinary freight camel brings about \$30, but a good riding camel costs \$150 and upward.

and is sometimes auctioned out to the highest bidder. The receipts go to the English government and a good rain may bring \$15,000 or \$20,000 more.

The People of Aden.

This is my second visit to Aden. My first was sixteen years ago, when I stopped here on my way around the world. I do not see that the town has changed and I doubt whether it has any more people than it had then. The population is about 40,000, and it is made up of all the nations and tribes common to the Indian ocean. It contains Arabs, Africans, Jews, Portuguese and East Indians. There are about 4000 Europeans, and in this number are the merchants, officials and soldiers. The majority of the people are Arab and the prevailing color is black. There are tall, lean, skinny black Bedouins from interior Arabia, who believe in Mahomet, and go through their prayers five times a day. There are black Mohammedans from Somaliland and black Christians from Abyssinia. In addition there are Parsees, Hindus and Indian Mohammedans of various shades of yellow and brown. A few of the Africans are woolly-headed, but more of them have wavy hair, and the hair of the women hangs down in cork-screw curls on both sides of their faces. Of these people neither sex wears much clothing. The men have a turban around the waist, and the women wear only skirts which reach to the feet.

Conspicuous Economy.

Willie Hoppe, the billiard champion, was talking in New York about the conspicuous retracements that the money panic has caused many millionaires to make.

On the Move.

The Rev. A. C. Jeffries, the father of the noted pugilist, was contradicting again the rumor that his son would return to the ring.

A Nature One.

The late Francis Thompson, the English poet, said a magazine editor, "had a great love for birds. He once told me a pretty story about a swallow."

Stuck.

A magazine editor of New York was praising Rudyard Kipling.

was created? Here in its origin, as told by the Arabs. They say that God first formed the horse taking up a handful of the swift south wind and blowing upon it. The horse, however, was not satisfied with his making. He complained to God that his neck was too short for easy grazing and that his hoofs were so hard that they sank in the sand. Moreover, he said there was no hump on his back to steady the saddle. Thereupon, to satisfy the horse, God created the camel, making him according to the equine's suggestions. And when the horse saw his ideal in flesh and blood he was frightened to death at its ugliness and galloped away. Since then there is no horse that is not scared when it first sees a camel.

Some Good Stories Told by and About Prominent People

A Needed Resolution.

THE Rev. William R. Huntington, of New York, said recently that it was more dangerous to be a railway brakeman than to be a murderer, and proved his assertion with statistics showing that one murderer in 73 was hanged, whereas one brakeman in 30 was killed.

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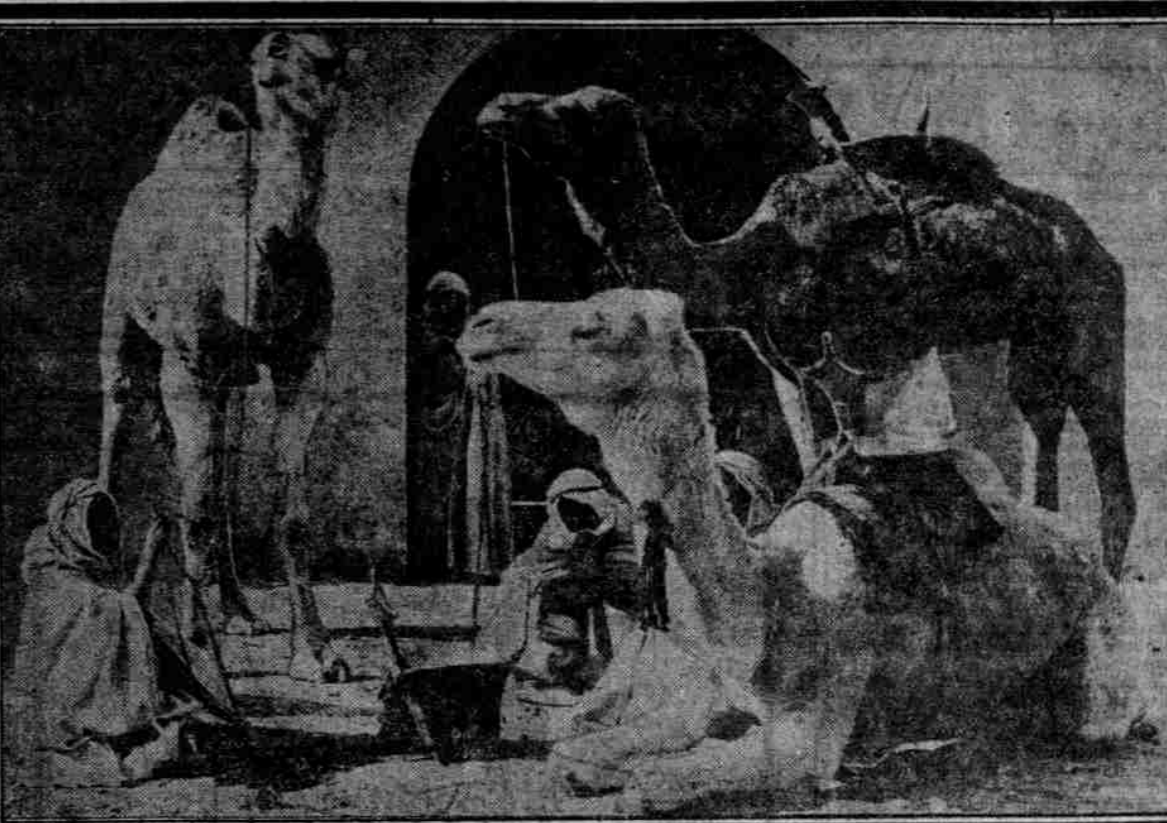
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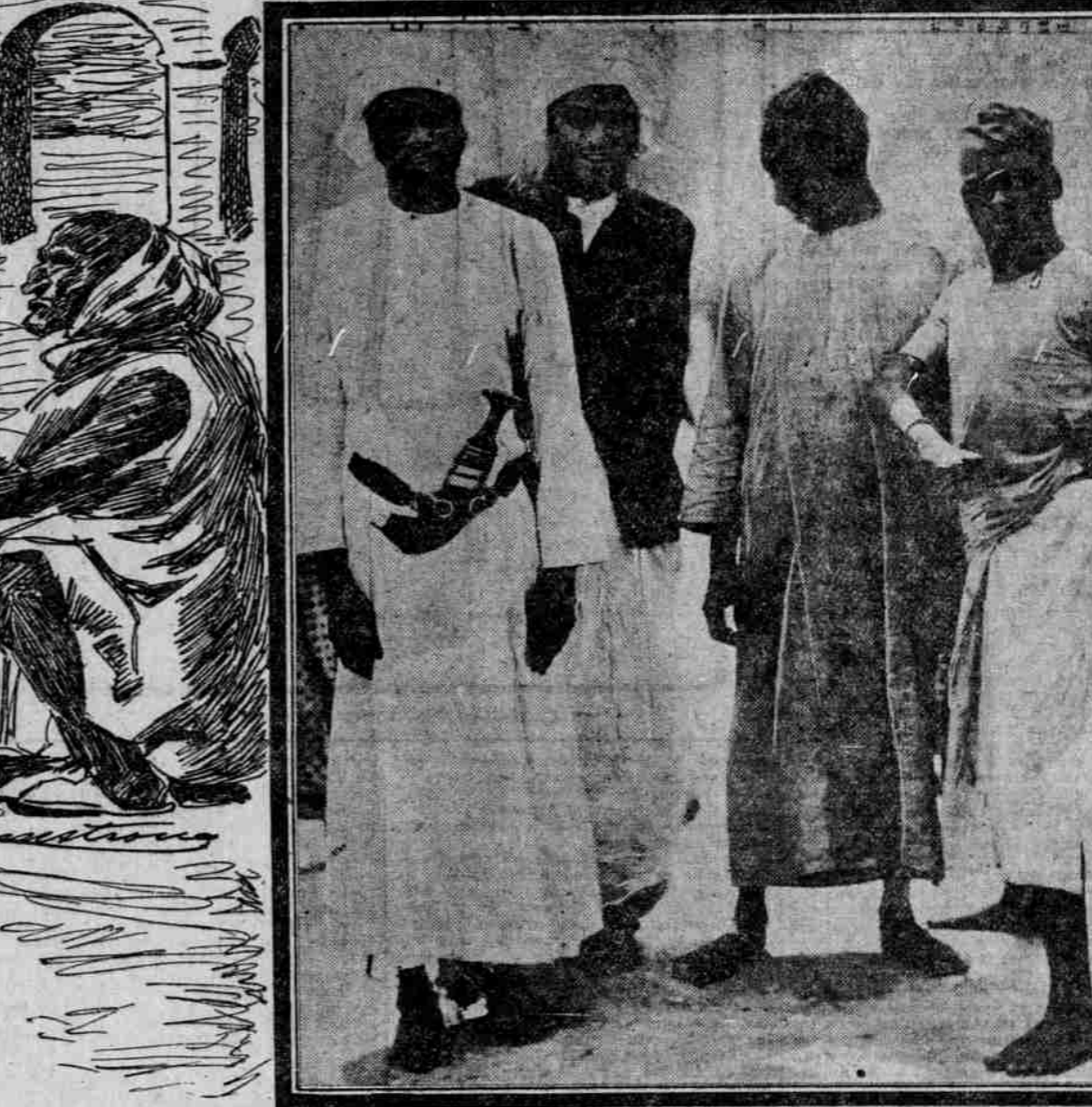
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RIDING CAMELS WHICH GO 100 MILES A DAY



HINDOOS AT ADEN. THE EAST INDIANS ARE EVERYWHERE

all night, and the result was the water buffalo.

I have made inquiries here and elsewhere as to the Arabian horse. He is a comparatively scarce animal and he does not run wild in the desert, as some people suppose. Indeed, comparatively few of the Arabian tribes have horses, and the best are kept on the plateau of Najd, in the center of the peninsula. They belong to the Anazah tribe, which is one of the oldest of all, and which claims to date back to the flood. It is a wealthy tribe, and it has been breeding horses for many generations. The best stock has pedigrees going back to the time of Mahomet, and the very choicest come from five mares which were owned by the

prophet and blessed by him. These horses seldom go out of Arabia. They are owned by the chiefs, and are not sold, except in times of direst necessity. Now and then a few get into Egypt and other parts of North Africa, and the Sultan of Turkey is able to buy some for his stables.

During my stay in Algeria I saw 150 stallions in the great army stables at Bldah. Perhaps one-third of them were Arabian, and they were kept to breed horses for the French army. The Khedive of Egypt has some Arabian thoroughbreds, and there are a few in Morocco and Abyssinia.

Two of the best stallions ever imported were those which General Grant brought from Constantinople. This was, I think, during his tour around the world. While visiting Turkey he and the sultan visited the royal stables together. As they looked over the horses the sultan told Grant to pick out the one he liked best, and he designated a dapple gray, called The Leopard. "It is yours," said the sultan, "and this also," pointing to a four-year-old colt called Linden Tree. In due time these two horses arrived in the United States and were put on General Ed Beale's farm near Washington. They were used for breeding, and they produced altogether about fifty fine colts. Aden, Arabia, Dec. 12.

The Bearded Countess.

Miss Mary Garden, the famous singer, talked at a dinner in New York about the hirsute strength which French women develop as they ripen in years.

The Green Sailor.

Mark Twain was talking about a play that had failed.

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Prompt.

A reporter, interviewing Thomas A. Edison about his remarkable 11000 cement house—a house that will be molded and ready for occupancy in a few days—pointed out certain objections to the structure.

The Two Thieves.

Leslie M. Shaw, ex-Secretary of the Treasury, was discussing the fate of a corrupt capitalist whom the panic compelled to confess.

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